

II. RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION

Claims 1, 8-10, 14, 25, 27-29, 35, 37, 42, 45, 49, 51-52, 56, 59, 60, 70-71, 74-77, 79, 84-85 and 88 have been amended to even more particularly point out and claim the subject matter of the claims. New claims 91-105 have been added. Claims 4, 7, 20, 46, 55 and 61-63 have been canceled. Claims 1-3, 5-6, 8-19, 21-45, 47-54, 56-60, 64-105 are pending in the present application.

A. Minor Informalities in the Claims

To the extent that they have not been further amended as described elsewhere herein, the claims have been amended to address the minor informalities noted in the Office Action. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

B. The 35 USC § 112 Rejections

Applicants believe claims 74-78 to be clear and definite under 35 USC § 112 prior to this amendment. However, claims 74, 75 and 77 have been amended herein to even more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the claims. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

C. The 35 USC § 102 Rejections

The claims as amended are allowable over the cited references. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the rejected and/or other claims in follow-on and/or other applications and to present arguments with respect to such claims in such applications. Furthermore, Applicants note that they do not necessarily amend or cancel claims because of the rejections over the cited references; rather, Applicants merely seek to facilitate compact prosecution and to expedite the issuance of a patent without agreeing with the rejections of the claims.

D. The Objected-To Claims of the Office Action

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite, in part, “further comprising a damping mechanism coupled to said moving lens component”. The Office Action objected to previous claims 4 and 7 which each recited “further comprising a damping mechanism coupled to said moving lens component.” Although current claim 1 and the dependent claims therefrom do not include all the limitations of claims from which previous claims 4 and 7 depended, current claim 1 and the claims dependent therefrom are allowable because they include the above-noted limitation from previous claims 4 and 7, and because previous claims 4 and 7 were not rejected in the Office Action.

Independent claim 14 has been amended to recite, in part, “further comprising a damping mechanism configured to dampen movement of said moving lens relative to said lens assembly housing.” The Office Action objected to previous claim 20 which recited “further comprising a damping mechanism configured to dampen movement of said moving lens component relative to said lens assembly housing.” Although current claim 14 and the dependent claims therefrom do not include all the limitations of claims from which previous claim 20 depended, current claim 14 and the claims dependent therefrom are allowable because they include the above-noted limitation (without the word “component” after “moving lens”) from previous claim 20, and because previous claim 20 was not rejected in the Office Action.

Independent claim 42 has been amended to recite, in part, “wherein said actuatable lens assembly further comprises a damping mechanism coupled to said moving lens component.” The Office Action objected to previous claim 46 which recited “wherein said actuatable lens assembly further comprises a damping mechanism coupled

to said moving lens component.” Although current claim 42 and the dependent claims therefrom do not include all the limitations of claims from which previous claim 46 depended, current claim 42 and the claims dependent therefrom are allowable because they include the above-noted limitation from previous claim 46, and because previous claim 46 was not rejected in the Office Action.

Independent claim 52 has been amended to recite, in part, “further comprising damping movement of said moving lens component using a damping mechanism coupled to said moving lens component.” The Office Action objected to previous claim 55 which recited “further comprising damping movement of said moving lens component using a damping mechanism coupled to said moving lens component.” Although current claim 52 and the dependent claims therefrom do not include all the limitations of claims from which previous claim 55 depended, current claim 52 and the claims dependent therefrom are allowable because they include the above-noted limitation from previous claim 55, and because previous claim 55 was not rejected in the Office Action.

New claim 91 recites, in part, “wherein said lens guidance mechanism comprises one or more guide shaft mounting members movably received by one or more guide shafts.” The Office Action objected to previous claim 5 which recited “wherein said lens guidance mechanism comprises one or more guide shaft mounting members movably received by one or more guide shafts.” Although new claim 91 does not include all the limitations of claims from which previous claim 5 depended, new claim 91 is allowable because it includes the above-noted limitation from previous claim 5, and because previous claim 5 was not rejected in the Office Action.

New claim 92 recites, in part, “wherein said lens guidance mechanism comprises one or more ferromagnetic fluid bearings.” The Office Action objected to previous claim 6 which recited “wherein said lens guidance mechanism comprises one or more ferromagnetic fluid bearings.” Although new claim 92 does not include all the limitations of claims from which previous claim 6 depended, new claim 92 is allowable because it includes the above-noted limitation from previous claim 6, and because previous claim 6 was not rejected in the Office Action.

New claim 93 recites, in part, “wherein said optical block comprises a folded light path optical block.” The Office Action objected to previous claim 12 which recited “wherein said optical block comprises a folded light path optical block.” Although new claim 93 (and new claim 94 dependent therefrom) do not include all the limitations of claims from which previous claim 12 depended, new claims 93 and 94 are allowable because they include the above-noted limitation from previous claim 12, and because previous claim 12 was not rejected in the Office Action.

New claim 95 recites, in part, “wherein said stationary coil component is thermally coupled to said inner side of said lens barrel; and wherein said lens barrel comprises a thermally conductive material.” The Office Action objected to previous claim 19 which recited “wherein said stationary coil component is thermally coupled to said inner side of said lens barrel; and wherein said lens barrel comprises a thermally conductive material.” Although new claim 95 does not include all the limitations of claims from which previous claim 19 depended, new claim 95 is allowable because it includes the above-noted limitation from previous claim 19, and because previous claim 19 was not rejected in the Office Action.

New claim 96 recites, in part, “wherein said optical block comprises a folded light path optical block.” The Office Action objected to previous claim 23 which recited “wherein said optical block comprises a folded light path optical block.” Although new claim 96 does not include all the limitations of claims from which previous claim 23 depended, new claim 96 is allowable because it includes the above-noted limitation from previous claim 23, and because previous claim 23 was not rejected in the Office Action.

New claim 97 recites, in part, “wherein said optical block comprises a closed circuit television optical block.” The Office Action objected to previous claim 24 which recited “wherein said optical block comprises a closed circuit television optical block.” Although new claim 97 does not include all the limitations of claims from which previous claim 24 depended, new claim 97 is allowable because it includes the above-noted limitation from previous claim 24, and because previous claim 24 was not rejected in the Office Action.

New claim 98 recites, in part, “wherein said actuatable lens assembly further comprises one or more ferromagnetic fluid bearings.” The Office Action objected to previous claim 47 which recited “wherein said actuatable lens assembly further comprises one or more ferromagnetic fluid bearings.” Although new claim 98 does not include all the limitations of claims from which previous claim 47 depended, new claim 98 is allowable because it includes the above-noted limitation from previous claim 47, and because previous claim 47 was not rejected in the Office Action.

New claim 99 recites, in part, “wherein said optical block assembly comprises at least two of said actuatable lens assemblies, a first one of said at least two actuatable lens

assemblies comprising a moving focus lens, and a second one of said at least two actuatable lens assemblies comprising a moving zoom lens.” The Office Action objected to previous claim 48 which recited “wherein said optical block assembly comprises at least two of said actuatable lens assemblies, a first one of said at least two actuatable lens assemblies comprising a moving focus lens, and a second one of said at least two actuatable lens assemblies comprising a moving zoom lens.” Although new claim 99 (and new claims 100-102 dependent therefrom) do not include all the limitations of claims from which previous claim 48 depended, new claims 99-102 are allowable because they include the above-noted limitation from previous claim 48, and because previous claim 48 was not rejected in the Office Action.

New claim 103 recites, in part, “wherein said optical block comprises a folded light path optical block.” The Office Action objected to previous claim 58 which recited “wherein said optical block comprises a folded light path optical block.” Although new claim 103 does not include all the limitations of claims from which previous claim 58 depended, new claim 103 is allowable because it includes the above-noted limitation from previous claim 58, and because previous claim 58 was not rejected in the Office Action.

New claim 104 recites, in part, “wherein said optical block comprises a closed circuit television optical block.” The Office Action objected to previous claim 59 which recited “wherein said optical block comprises a closed circuit television optical block.” Although new claim 104 does not include all the limitations of claims from which previous claim 59 depended, new claim 104 is allowable because it includes the above-

noted limitation from previous claim 59, and because previous claim 59 was not rejected in the Office Action.

New claim 105 recites, in part, “further comprising controlling said movement of said moving lens component in tandem with controlling movement of a different moving lens component of a different lens assembly of said optical block such that the movement speed of said moving lens component equals the movement speed of said different moving lens component.” The Office Action objected to previous claim 60 which recited “further comprising controlling said movement of said moving lens component in tandem with controlling movement of a different moving lens component of a different lens assembly of said optical block such that the movement speed of said moving lens component equals the movement speed of said different moving lens.” Although new claim 105 does not include all the limitations of claims from which previous claim 60 depended, new claim 105 is allowable because it includes the above-noted limitation from previous claim 60 (with the addition of the word “component” after “moving lens”), and because previous claim 60 was not rejected in the Office Action.

D. Conclusion

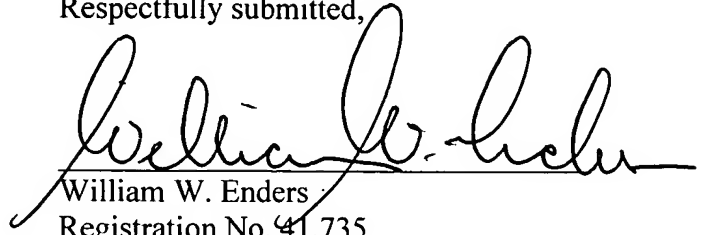
The pending claims have been shown above to be allowable over the cited references. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that claims 1-3, 5-6, 8-19, 21-45, 47-54, 56-60, 64-105 are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application and claims is courteously solicited.

Attached is a check in the amount of \$1,350.00 for 10 extra dependent claims and 11 extra independent claims. Should any other fees under 37 CFR 1.16-1.21 be required for any reason relating to the enclosed materials, the Commissioner is authorized to deduct such fees from Deposit Account No. 10-1205/COVI:004.

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.136(a)(3), the Commissioner is authorized to treat any concurrent or future reply that requires a petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.126(a) to be timely, as incorporating a petition for extension of time for the appropriate length of time, and the Commissioner is authorized to deduct any requisite extension of time fees under 37 CFR 1.16 to 1.21 from Deposit Account No. 10-1205/COVI:004.

The examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the phone number indicated below with any questions or comments, or to otherwise facilitate expeditious and compact prosecution of the application.

Respectfully submitted,



William W. Enders
Registration No. 41,735
Attorney for Applicant

O'KEEFE, EGAN & PETERMAN
1101 Capital of Texas Highway South
Building C, Suite 200
Austin, Texas 78746
(512) 347-1611
FAX: (512) 347-1615